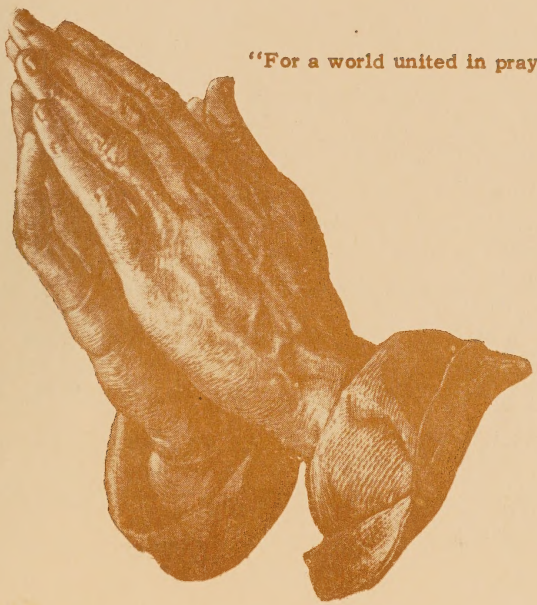
Fellowship in Prayer



"For a world united in prayer"

. . .We must cherish prayer and the mystic inward experiences of religion. For even as we seek God in the world of action, so we know, too, that He is with us in the quiet life of piety. When we bring Him our brokenness, our inadequacy and confusion, our contriteness of heart, He will answer. In prayer and deed we serve God, in the political world and in the sanctuary. God is wherever man's heart will allow Him to enter.

— Rabbi Arthur Gilbert

ume XVII JUNE 1966 Number 3

OUR PURPOSE

To promote the practice of prayer among ALL religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

22 East 29th Street New York 16, N.Y.

Volume XVII June 1966 Number 3

SINCERITY

Sincerity is truthfulness; it is trustworthiness.

Sincerity, in this world, is a reflection of the inner world of reality—the world of the illumined, the world of spirit.

Sincerity stems from a pure heart, made pure by infinite love, through communion with God. Sincerity is the essence of righteous living.

A sincere person is a guiding light in a world of falsity and deception, he is in this world but not of it. A sincere person lives and moves in harmony with the law of righteousness and remains steadfast and incorruptible in the face of temptation.

Sincerity manifests through the countenance and through the outpouring of its uplifting and sustaining vibrations. To be in the presence of a sincere person is to experience perfect relaxation, calmness, peacefulness and contentedness.

Sincerity is the exalted estate of those whose lives are lighted by the Spirit of Christ—"The Light that lighteth the world."

He who dwells in the exalted estate of sincerity walks with God in the paths of righteousness.

— Harry Halsey Starrett

EDITORIAL

A SPIRITUAL PRESENCE

A Gallup Poll conducted early in May at the time the "Consultation on Church Union" was convening in Dallas, Texas, produced a main result which deserves attention whether or not we are disposed toward the denominational merger movement. Questioning members of the Churches whose leaders are in discussion about the possible formation of a united Protestant denomination of some twenty-four million members, the pollsters found that the majority of laymen and women seem to be in favor of such a union.

An immediate elementary conclusion would then be: why not immediately form the church? Why not put the issue to a vote of the members? Such action, of course, will not be taken at this time. It cannot be, for—with commendable care—those forward-looking churchmen engineering the union effort realize that they have passed but the preliminary hurdle; years of contact, of growth in mutual understanding, will be necessary before any concrete step is taken.

Looking broadly at this United States merger trend—and at similar movements underway in Canada, Britain, Africa, India and elsewhere—one can reach a variety of conclusions. If we are among those who try to look above and beyond denominational ties in search of religious truth, it is easy to shrug our shoulders and minimize, if not ignore, the importance of the "organized" groups' attempts to form common organizations. After all, we can say, these are but human structures which, in the full scope of spiritual life, have little or no meaning.

But, in deeper consideration, can these sometimes fumbling and often feeble efforts of groups of men to find common ground truly be min-

imized? We don't think so. Rather, it would seem that we should applaud and encourage the efforts, for even in their present elementary stages they are manifestations of a deep striving for human unity which, it becomes increasingly apparent, marks our age. Whether we are Christian, Jew or Hindu, whether we ascribe to a church affiliation or choose to worship privately and individually, we must give proper attention to this unifying spirit. As a war in the East threatens to expand, as inequity and starvation continue to proliferate in a world of generally increasing prosperity, it becomes ever more obvious that the only true hope for the future of man lies in his ability to overcome parochial concerns and learn to meet and love his neighbor.

* * * * *

As we reflect on the past few years, we can see that the religions of the world have made great strides. There has been the momentous Ecumenical Council; Protestant Churches, as mentioned above, are energetically and honestly exploring their reasons for continued separation. More important, perhaps, are the increasing moves among men from the different great religions to reach each other.

In this regard, a meeting which garnered little publicity but which in the final analysis may well stand as one of high significance, took place at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey early in May. This was the Second Gallahue Conference, supported by a grant from an Indianapolis insurance executive with a vision of an ultimate "world community" which encompasses all major religions. In attendance at the sessions were leading scholars of the Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic persuasions. Their effort, over a week of discussions, was to pierce walls of misunderstanding and probe for possible new means of interreligious rapport.

Of prime importance at the Princeton meeting was the fact that this was not a session aimed at wiping out religious delineations and forming a syncretistic "one world religion." Rather, the conference was marked by a strong mutual respect among participants for each other's beliefs.

A speaker at the conference who seemed to strike a common

note was Father Robley Edward Whitson, a Roman Catholic theologian from Fordham University. He noted that dialogue among the world religions is "still at its most primitive stage" and must move on to a new level. The present status, he said, is one where men of good will are talking "to" one another; what is needed, he went on, is for these men to talk "with" one another. This situation, the priest continued, would involve not only an exchange of ideas but "the shared formation of ideas."

"Conferences such as this to promote exchange," said Father Whitson, "are important sources of stimulation, but they cannot themselves form on-going communities of knowledge. And this is precisely what must occur for the revolutionary new stage to take place."

* * * * *

As members of a fellowship which, over the years, has had such thoughts at the core of its existence, we can take heart in the fact that developments in the many different religious worlds seem to be aiming in the same direction. And, as is expressed so eloquently in the quotation from Rabbi Arthur Gilbert on the cover of this issue, it is being recognized increasingly that if a common language for all men exists it is the language of prayer.

If one main development can be pinpointed out of such a recent happening as, say, the Catholic Ecumenical Council, it is the realization that a Divine Spirit was guiding Pope John in launching the event and remained present throughout the four years of the Council. We can only be confident that this same Spirit—not only Christian, or Jewish, or Hindu, but a Spirit which is available to all men—is present in the world. We must—in our individual ways, and through our various religions and churches and groups—pray for continued Spiritual presence as we seek in our humble ways to find peace with ourselves and with each other.

WHERE DO RELIGIONS MEET?

Our century has so many interesting characteristics that it is impossible accurately to describe the lives and aspirations of people of the modern era, or all the discoveries and inventions of scientific investigation. Many of the secrets of the outer world have been discovered and the intellectual stature of humanity has grown. The study of space has become an all-absorbing topic. Even the study of man is not lagging behind. New, startling discoveries about the electrical impulses of the brain suggest that we may soon adjust a human being to society like a machine. These are the tendencies in the modern world. People today are mostly outdrawn, with most of our activities related to the external world. In brief, science, economics, and politics have become more important subjects of study than religion or philosophy.

The reason for this new attitude is that these subjects are all practical, they have some direct bearing on life, and are not based upon assumptions. Although there may be a revival of interest in religion, and churches are said to have good attendance, yet an unattached thinking man finds it hard to discover sufficient reasons why he should accept any organized dogmatic version of religion. He is apt to feel that religion is made up of assertions of facts about the external world which are not provable but yet should be given credence. There is a strong suggestion that one should not question the authenticity of these traditional statements. Thus many people find the only solution in blindly checking in themselves every impulse to question.

Although this attitude is very unpleasant and hurts those who are attached to religion, yet when we analyze the authoritarian presentations of the subject we find that they break down, that they cannot stand any critical study. If we put forward the argument that the founders of religions were not ordinary men but possessed of special powers and superior authority and were chosen to give a unique saving message, then each prophet naturally is equally great and there is no need of preaching one's religion to others who have their own prophets. What Buddha preached and what the New Testament contains should lead to no conflicts.

It becomes all the more painful when a religious sect wants to preach that it alone has the Truth, which others do not have. No prophet can be considered to have a greater insight or a superior knowledge of the Truth than others.

If our generation is perplexed with questions relating to religion, it is because of modern religion's dependence upon authority and its tendency to introduce supernatural elements in support of its teaching. Religion has to give freedom for a rational inquiry into these teachings. We all know that a thoughtful. analytical inquiry helps in scientific progress, and we find no reason why the same method should not be used

in the study of religion. If religious books have eternal truth, they need not be jealously guarded against inquiry, since truth should stand any amount of criticism or analysis.

Most people have their religion because they were born it it. One is a Hindu because his ancestors were Hindus and in the same way we have the followers of Judaism, Islam, Christianity, etc. Each becomes a heritage to be protected from the intruder. When all inquiries are prevented, however, people become extremely fanatical about their religion, and history gives us ample proof of how in the name of religion terrible wars were fought and tens of thousands killed...all because God revealed two types of Truth to two different prophets. Even today we have not gone much beyond this.

People naturally wonder why, when we apply reason to all other plans and activities, we should not do the same even with religion. In all other fields we are able to find areas of common agreement. A Chinese scientist may win world recognition for his work, an Einstein will be regarded universally as a mathematical prodigy, a musician may be a follower of any religion and be admired by everyone. They are all treated with equal honor in their fields. It is quite different in matters of religion.

Further, God is generally believed to be a mysterious Person and we of today do not like very much mystery. God becomes connected finally with ideas which we do not understand and even the unbeliever says: "God only knows whether there will be sufficient rainfall this year." So He is for many a kind of "Sanctuary of Ignorance."

Considering all this, and remembering the numerous ills brought about by fighting creeds and warring religious groups, many are prone to question the utility of religion and its value to humanity.

With this background we can study the question: Where Do Religions Meet?

Let us first consider the foundation of religions, the scriptures. Who wrote them? In some cases people say God wrote them. But we have no evidence of this and become skeptical about a God who writes only for a few people. Then there are the scriptures produced by great minds without divine inspiration. They had insights into the problems faced by humanity and gave their answers. Many of their statements have sparks of Truth and hence have some attraction for us all. This is the feature which makes the scriptures sacred. It is why people who have no bias or prejudice for other religions feel drawn towards them. A practising Hindu reads the Sermon on the Mount and feels it to be the words of God, akin to what his Rishis have said in the Upanishads.

So far it is universal. Every scripture has features appealing to humanity , seeking the Supreme Truth. They also contain ideas that will help in the conduct of life. Some sections are very ancient and some are later interpolations. It is true that scriptures have God-inspired statements, but that does not necessarily prove that the en-

tire scripture is God's work. There are statements which deal with geography, astronomy, etc., that are incorrect according to our latest scientific discoveries. There are sections which have a special bearing on life at the particular time they were written and which do not relate to our life for all times. To extend the scriptures to all the problems of life and "consult the Vedas when we have lost a cow," as they say in India, is a meaningless superstitious estimate of the importance of scriptures. That kind of devotion generally lends a hand for fanaticism.

In the study of scriptures we should make the distinction between the eternal truths and statements of solution for immediate problems. The Bible contains myths, legends, and traditions which show the evolution of human aspirations, but none should take the whole as history. There are, indeed, very few scriptures which assert that they are to be implicitly accepted as God's words and their authority should never be questioned.

What do the scriptures contain? They refer to God, his nature, his activities. But it is very hard to convince a scientist about a creator God because, he says, ideas gathered from scientific investigations have proved that the creation can be explained entirely in a mechanistic manner. It may be that we have not created life, he declares, but that does not by itself create the necessity for a belief in God. Many even feel that the idea of God itself is a creation of man, for filling up some blanks or standing as an answer to questions otherwise left unanswered; and some consider religion as a kind of primitive science.

We have to remember also that every ancient religion claimed dogmatic finality. They all asserted that they held the absolute truth, but all have had to lose their place. All were replaced by new attitudes and new religions. The temples of the Greek gods and goddesses are now only places for sight-seers, and the mighty deities of Egypt slumber in abondoned shrines without a votary.

No religion is perfect and it is absurd to believe that this or that religion one day will be the world religion. After all, religions are created by human beings. There is an evolution in human nature and religion has to adapt itself to this condition.

This finally brings us to an important question: If organizations did not exist, how would people know anything about higher values of life? Can we say organized religions are all bad? And what use is there for religion itself?

These questions are all answered only by going back to the prophets and not to the institutions. The Church is of less importance than the Christ. We should go to his words and his life and study all the philosophy and theology that came later only in relation to him and his words. Man, unable to see the Truth that his prophet perceived directly, uses his intellect to find the same teaching. His is not intuitional inspiration, but a creation of his intellect.

So the wonderful teachings of the prophets, which come to us with the freshness of the mountain air, get mixed with the smell and smoke of cities and lose their special features. Whatever might have been the ancient beliefs, it is the prophets, saints, and sages who have kept religions alive. It is their words that can stand by us to give the meaning of religion. It is they who talk of God with conviction and bring us conviction. It is their words that are the scriptures.

These prophets did not create a variety of religions but preached only one ideal. Whenever we get confused and fail to understand the import of religion, we have to go to the source. At once all doubts vanish. We feel, "Here is a person who talks religion *and gives religion.*" It is reliable. It agrees with the words of other prophets.

One should identify oneself with the words of a prophet and follow them as far as it lies in our power. Secondly, we should not forget the churches are meant primarily to foster the spirit of the founders. Buddha did not want his name to be perpetuated as a founder of a religion, but only that his teachings should be followed. From the words and lives of these great souls we can learn much as to where religions meet, as well as the purpose and value of religion itself. With them there is no forced presentation of any dogma. The idea of God, for example. It is not proved or argued in any way. No text is quoted when God is mentioned. He is real to them and no arguments are necessary. How is He known? Directly — by personal contact. Our purpose in life is to know Him in the same way.

Listen to the words of India's great prophet of modern times Ramakrishna:

> You see many stars in the sky but do not find them when the sun rises. Can you say that there are no stars in the heaven during day? So, O man, because you behold not God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God."

And again:

> The Lord of the universe, though one, manifests Himself differently according to the different likings of His worshippers, and each of these has his own view of God which he values most. To some, God is a kind master, a loving father, a sweet smiling mother, a devoted friend . . . .

According to the prophets, God is an ocean of mercy and ever ready to help the struggling souls. If a person goes towards the Lord, earnestly seeking Him, his prayers will be answered.

We are told that the best way of reaching Him is by loving Him with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our soul. When our love for Him is intense, the Lord reveals Himself. This love of God should not be given away to worldly objects. It should finally become a passion so that you feel you cannot live without Him.

Pray to Him unceasingly in secret; surrender yourself to Him; feel Him as your dearest.

Give away all those things that do not help in going towards the Lord. Get the qualities that will take you to Him. For a mind divided cannot go to Him, just as a thread

when it is divided into many strands. cannot go through the eye of the needle.

Finally, we should love humanity, love the whole world as a divine manifestation of God. This expansion of the heart will open our eyes. to the Lord.

The prophets, by their simple instructions based upon direct experience, make it easy for us to reach God, They all agree on the essentials; and it is there, in their words and lives; and there alone, that all religions meet.

—Swami Ritajananda

NOTE: It has been the practice of Fellowship in Prayer to reprint from time to time articles of especially lasting value. The article on these pages, we feel, is definitely in this category. Written for our Tenth Anniversary issue in 1960, Swami Ritajananda's comments are today as pertinent as when they were originally expressed.

OUR BURDEN BEARER

The little sharp vexations
And the briars that catch and fret,
Why not take all to the Helper
Who has never failed us yet?
Tell Him about the heartaches
And tell Him the longings, too,
Tell Him the baffled purpose
When we scarce know what to do.
Then leaving all our weakness
With the One divinely strong,
Forget that we bore the burden
And carry away the song.

— Author Unknown

By courtesy of St. Lawrence Fine

THE VALUE OF A SMILE

It costs nothing, but creates much.

It enriches those who receive, without impoverishing those who give.

It happens in a flash, and the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

None are so rich they can get along without it; none so poor but are richer for its benefit.

It is rest to the weary, sunshine to the sad, and Nature's best antidote for trouble.

It cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen for it is something that is no earthly good until it is given away.

And yet, when you give it away, it always comes back.

And nobody needs a smile so much as those who have none to give.

— Dale Carnegie

By courtesy of Murray Young

FROM HERE

I want to sail my
oceans looking out—from this
house large with loving.

I want to climb my
mountains looking up—from this
valley yielding grain.

Let me orbit my
far galaxies, borrowing
your eyes...yours...and yours...

O let me probe my
craters deep beneath this crust
of me, finding: God!

— Emily Sargent Councilman

GUEST EDITORIAL

To a Better Understanding

Marius C. Thode

IN THE Proverbs of Solomon it is written *"Wisdom is the principal thing;* therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

What a comfort it is in a time of tribulation to have a friend who is possessed of complete understanding. It is of even greater comfort to know and understand God, and the practical common sense teachings of Jesus.

Let us be thankful that we are not living in the ages when the ancients did not know God. Still, in some vague sense, they felt that there must be a Creator of some kind. So they designed their own false gods; they worshipped a Sun God, a God of War, a Goddess of Peace, a Goddess of the Dawn, a God of the Harvest and many more. Later, out of better enlightenment, grew the idea that there was but one God.

The populace in general was ignorant, and the one God was harshly presented to them as a sort of dual personality. On the one hand, it was promised that those who behaved would achieve a form of immortality and dwell with the angels after death. On the other hand, there was an appeal to ignorant fear—brimstone and the tortures of hell would befall those who misbehaved here on earth. It is not within human nature to await a reward promised for some distant future, and which, like a life insurance policy, requires that we have to die in order to win. Likewise, those of evil spirit were not greatly deterred by the threat of dire punishment to come after death. So the world struggled blindly through the dark ages.

Then, two milleniums ago, came Jesus of Nazareth. He did not preach a theology. His teaching was spiritual. God is Spirit, and

the Spirit of God dwells within each of us. Our direct link with God is through prayer. God does not intrude in our lives, until we call upon Him in our prayers. No two opposing entities can abide together in man's temple at the same time. *Evil* and *hatred* cannot dwell side-by-side with *goodness* and *love*. Courage does not desert us; it is when we take leave of our courage that fear enters our temple. Just as soon as we pray to God for help and guidance, our courage will return, and fear evacuates. So it is with all opposites, the good and evil.

"As a man thinketh, so in his heart is he." Holding thoughts of good health helps to ward off illness. If we think that illness is to be our lot, we shall be ill. Our doctor, along with our prayers, help to restore good health. Actually, God is the physician. Human flesh is weak, and it is understandable that wrong thoughts may creep into our minds. Temptation invites us to seek what we should not countenance. Perhaps in a spirit of revenge, we may plan to harm a fellow man. Of itself, the mere thought is not a sin. It is when we proceed to carry out the thought in action that we sin. When such evil design enters our temple, that is the time to pray silently and sincerely for God's guidance, and He will deliver us from evil.

Jesus commanded: *"Love ye one another."* Much of the teaching of Jesus applies to nations as well as individuals. Once *LOVE* flows across the borders of all countries, there will no longer be need for soldiers to cross those borders. When we practice being kind to others, we are rewarded with kindness in return. A friendly smile begets a smile. When we aid the less fortunate, we are in turn helped in our own day of need. We must understand that we may not always be compensated by the same person we may have benefitted. We are repaid in the coin we pay out. Good for good, and evil for evil. That is God's law, and it cannot be evaded. Accordingly we receive our reward, or punish ourselves, here and now, and not in some undefined future. He who performs merely in the expectation of reward, is seldom satisfied with the reward. We must hold the firm belief that God never fails to reward us for the good we do. Over one hundred years ago, William Cowper wrote: "God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to

perform." Truly it may be said that the world little knows what real peace and happiness it cheats itself out of by not walking with God!

Many of us derive comfort from reading the Bible. Sometimes we are challenged by those who ridicule and point out the contradictions in the Bible. They do not understand that the Bible was written by worthy men, and that each told his story sincerely, according to his best recollection of the event. Justices in our modern courts of law will certify that often two witnesses, each telling the truth, will give a different version of what they saw. The great Apostle Paul had never met Jesus, in fact, as Saul of Tarshish, he had been anti-Christ. Once converted, however, he became one of the most fervent teachers of Christianity. He was crucified by the Roman heirarchy because he endangered their power over the people by drawing them to God. In our modern day we are not expected to die for God. For our own well being, we are asked only to *live* for, and with God!

For a clearer understanding of our Bible reading, we should realize that the original meaning of certain words has changed over the centuries. Even English words have taken on a different meaning since the Bible was translated into English. One wishes that we had a better knowledge of the Aramaic language which Jesus spoke. We pray: *"Give us this day our daily bread."* In earlier days the word "bread" had a broader meaning. It included other necessities, and comforts of life. "Bread" was a symbol, which should be interpreted in a wider sense.

We become a bit confused when we read: *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."* In the Aramaic tongue, "meek" was not meant to convey what we mean by meek today. We think of a meek person as being a lowly type, without the courage to fight life's battles. What Jesus meant by "meek" included those willing to accept God's will and His wisdom, rather than some yearning we selfishly prefer for ourselves. By the word "earth" Jesus implied the world outside of man, the world which man strives to win a part of through honest planning and work. So we should understand that instruction as: "Blessed are those who have become the heirs of God, and accept His wis-

dom, for they shall inherit dominion over God's bounty, and their rightful share of the world." In our Bible reading, for peaceful relaxation, few passages can be more restful and instructive, than to read and meditate over the Psalms of King David.

In our present topsy-turvy world, every Christian has the God-given duty to join his prayers with those of his brothers for the salvation of the world. Each individual prayer adds to the strength and power of universal prayer. Let us think of those unfortunate, devout Christians enslaved in Communist countries. They are forbidden to openly exercise their devotion to God. They pray silently for deliverance from their slavery. We must join our prayers with theirs, in the firm faith that God the Creator will not see His creation destroyed by infidels.

Autocratic rulers have always feared the power of God, for it interferes with their tyrannical exploiting of the people. Those who mock God, and forbid Christians to practice their true belief, will themselves suffer the penalty of oblivion, even as the false belief of the "Divine Right of Kings" has vanished. God is not mocked. Only by the Spirit within us, expressed through our prayers, can the enemies of God be thwarted. To aim for "a world united in prayer" is an uplifting endeavor, in which, with God's help, we cannot fail. It deserves the wholehearted cooperation of all who believe in God's liberty and freedom.

In the light of TRUTH
I find REALITY in a world of illusion;
I find tranquility in a world of confusion;
I find Peace in a world of strife
For I have found CHRIST — "The Way,
The TRUTH and the Life."

— Harry Halsey Starrett

A Day Of Dedication And Memory

Buddy Arnold

A writer in Chimes magazine calls Memorial day his memory day, but Memorial Day is more than a day of memories. It is a day to ponder our heritage. It is a day to rededicate ourselves to those truths we hold self-evident.

Yes, it is *also* a day of memory, for each headstone reminds someone of a beloved one. Here lies the young man who gave his life for his country, the friend whose life was cut short by tragedy, the beloved doctor who healed so many, a brother and a sister, a mother and a father, and a beloved grandmother.

We plant a flower, stop and think, and shed a secret tear.

Some of us will stay for the program that ends with the sorrowful taps, for we cannot linger. We must return to the living, and it is right that we do so.

As I told a young man who lost his father. We will never lose our loved ones if we continue to let their memory act as guidelines in the life we love. We must keep faith with those who have become released souls. The Lord has promised us a glad reunion, and the Lord keeps his word.

We should not live in vain. Our life should be worth while. We should do something with it. Let us truly listen to the message in the wind of any cemetery.

Too soon the call will come. I think we should live in such a way, that we are constantly prepared for the great journey. Such a life would give us a better world, for His kingdom would come, and exist in our midst.

My thoughts go to Viet Nam upon this day. Today some American soldier faces death. Why? I believe it is because the world hasn't heeded or practiced the gospel called love. If we are truly to have peace we must practice that gospel.

***

OUR GOD PROVIDES

Outside of my window in spring
I behold a wonderful scene.
Nature is adorning herself
with gems to enamour the soul,
while all creatures at banquets, feast
on the good that our God provides.

White apple trees, blossoms profuse,
their fragrance perfuming the air,
are hosts to waxwings and finches,
who dance on quivering branches
and happily sing, as they dine
on bounties that our God provides.

Red robins, erect and alert,
running, listening and seeking
little worms nestling in plowed sod;
agile and capricious chipmunks,
their fat jaws bulging with dainties—
they have found what our God provides.

Bees in the sweet hyacinth bed,
eager to gather their substance;
brown rabbits, scampering at play,
pause, to explore and discover
the greens in a young spring garden,
whose many seed our God provides.

In spring from my window I thrill,
a child before a wondrous scene!
Mystery anoints everything,
each glows with life resurrected.
I see with grateful thanksgiving
precious miracles our God provides.

— Lillian Wade Koerner

FROM EACH MOMENT

Zelma S. Dennis

The essence of living is distilled from the small moments of precious joy which perfume our lives. Life is made up of long periods of monotonous routine broken suddenly by an interval of beauty so lovely and unforgettable that, like a pressed flower in a book, the haunting fragrance rekindles anew a tender, momentous memory.

Like the perfumers of ancient times we should pour into the chalice of our heart these delicate moments fragile and fleeting as a spring blossom whose poignance has the power to sweep through our lives and leave its presence, a phantom of delight.

We gather moments variegated as wild flowers dancing upon an April hill. From each tender bloom we press the incense of a perfect beauty born from love. An orange poppy is a gypsy child with questing eyes and young spring faith. Wild lilac is new love that bursts into the heart with lavender flame. Lupines are a blend of grace and wise serenity, souls whose lives have known the years refining touch. They bend in eager winds... yet lift again their heads to follow sunlight's daily challenge.

Shy daisies carpet hills in countless numbers like sheep who follow deep ravines or wait by streams until someone whose awakened eye perceives the beauty of their simplicity.

These floral bouquets spread their message of rare loveliness in the austere rooms of the mansions of our minds. Beauty is the infinite light that permeates the soul, lifting beyond the mortal fear and dark. We must cultivate and cherish each flower-like moment blooming in its creative perfection, for its fragrant petals compressed into the vial of time permit the perfume to rise again upon the nostaglic mist of a heart full in remembering.

PETITION

My children picnic lavishly
Beneath a summer sky;
But, on a hill in Hungary,
Stefan eats his bread dry.

My children swim in safe, warm seas,
Dance beneath friendly stars;
Trudging Korea's cratered roads,
Young Kim is tired of wars.

Join us in raising hearts in prayer,
Petitioning the needs
Of bright-eyed children every-where
Of varied faiths and creeds.

— Alice Mackenzie Swaim

SPRING BOUQUET

Today my soul was clamoring for bread,
As, with the labor of the day, I sighed.
I gathered here and there a spray of bloom,
And placed them in a pitcher, satisfied.
The night draws on: the sullen rain may fall
But these sweet messengers of early spring
Diffuse a misty fragrance through the hall
And lift my inward heart in praise to sing.

WAR IN JULY

Birds in trees sing
And trees become singing birds
Hills hum streams croon
Winds make words
Feather-clouds ruffle, curled
Above a Summer world,
Honey-bees, sounding glad,
Harmonize...but people are sad
And people cry
Even in July
With Peace asleep;

All of Eden soon must weep
Until the doves so red this night
Once again fly white.

— Carla Patsuris

The peach gave of her blushing bounty's glow,
The currant, spicy sweetness in her gold.
The plum with fragrance filled her fluff of snow
Aglow with promise, each her story told.
And so, though all the world sleeps and is still,
And I, myself to pleasant dreams succumb,

Throughout the precious hours of rest, I will
Be smelling peach and currant bloom, and plum.

— Maud L. Moser

HAPPINESS HERE AND NOW

THE NATURE OF HAPPINESS

Genevieve Burnell

We emphasize the "here" and "now" aspect of happiness because too often people project their ideas of happiness into past or future. They think they may possibly attain happiness some day. They are looking for it tomorrow, manana; and as we all know, tomorrow never arrives. This is not at all satisfying because even though we have hopes of happiness, this does not make us feel very happy about it.

This presence of happiness is not lost in the past, and is not elusive as the future we are chasing like the will-o'-the-wisp. The only way to experience happiness as an actuality is in the eternal now. Time is so elusive we never seem to be able to put our finger on it. We say that the only time we can really possess is the present moment, but we no sooner speak of it than it has slipped into the past, and the future has not yet come. So we seem to have no time at all. Yet the experience of happiness is in this "now."

Of course, one of the greatest delusions about happiness is that it consists in things, in situations, that we must have this or that particular set of circumstances in order to be happy. We believe it has to do with externals and this makes us continually look for change in our situations and hope that something will develop that will give us happiness. The secret of it is that happiness does not rest in things. In the Texts of Taoism, Kwang Tze says that the ancients who knew the Tao were happy when they were reduced to extremities, and happy when they had a free course; their happiness was independent of both conditions.

Now, happiness does not rest on conditions at all; it comes

from within oneself and pours out. The Greeks spoke of it as a gift of the gods. To speak of happiness as a gift makes us realize that it isn't something we can buy or achieve by any kind of effort; it hasn't anything to do with situations, but it is something that comes from within. We might almost apply the definition that is used for the gift of healing—which isn't something that you can lay down and pick up, you know; it is the exterior radiation of an interior deification. We might almost say that happiness is interior deification that shines outwardly so that the person becomes a radiation of happiness; he doesn't take his happiness from other people or what other people do or say, nor from the situations that surround him. The person himself has touched the reservoir of happiness and one who has this makes people happy wherever he goes, without any thought about it; he doesn't try to do it, he doesn't exert any influence that he is aware of, but he radiates happiness because he is so abounding in it himself. He also pours it out on his conditions.

It is as if that happiness were an attribute of the rational soul of man that is like a cup held up to the Spirit. The Spirit flows into it and overflows in a radiation of happiness, which is what is meant when it is spoken of as a gift of the gods. The rational soul of man is finite, but he doesn't just hoard this sense of happiness within him; he lets it pour out through him to become a healing of conditions and of situations. It is like a light that radiates from a person who has touched the depths of spiritual consciousness where the union with God is discovered.

The word "good" tends to be an abstraction; but when you have a personal sense of goodness, it is to you satisfaction or happiness. Saint Thomas Aquinas makes the point—in regard to goodness and truth being the same, being identical—that the will seeks good and the intellect seeks truth. These two faculties, will and intellect, are the strongest faculties that man possesses. Well, if goodness and truth were not the same he would be torn asunder in his attempt to reach either goal, and, actually, it would be as though he had been created for frustration and defeat; because even as he attained truth he would

lose his sense of good, and as he attained good he would lose his sense of truth. If these two faculties in man were split, man would have no hope for sanity at all; he would be schizophrenic, a split personality. But man is not built for defeat nor for frustration nor for being torn asunder, and therefore the persuasion is—it isn't an argument but it is a persuasion—that truth and goodness must be identical. Therefore as man attains his goodness he attains truth, and the two faculties work harmoniously; there is an orientation in man which enables him to fulfill his nature, his perfection, and achieve what he desires. And actually, as Saint Thomas says, goodness is simply truth with the idea of desirability added to it.

In the rational study of axioms you learn the attributes of truth and you find that goodness—or satisfaction—equals the same truth, and therefore they must equal each other. To be satisfying, goodness must be eternal and unchangeable; and all the things that you have discovered to be true of truth are equally true of goodness. In every respect happiness includes the idea of goodness, because whatever makes you happy seems to you to be good; in fact, in all languages the word "good" is included in that which makes a person happy. We speak of good fortune, good luck, a good time, good situations that make us happy. What you apprehend as good brings you happiness. We are not saying that it is good, but you apprehend it as good and therefore it makes you happy. A thing that you apprehend as bad or evil does not make you happy unless to you it presents an aspect of good.

In the axiom of goodness you discover that that which motivates every person's activity is his desire for something that he apprehends as good; it stirs him, it inspires him to action, it sets him going, it is a motive force. When we speak of this motive force we are really talking about happiness because actually every person is activated by a desire for happiness. Sometimes he goes round and round the mulberry bush trying to acquire what he thinks is going to make him happy, and usually, because it is some material object, when he attains it he finds it isn't the thing he wanted after all. You remember the woman who just couldn't be happy at all unless she had a particular house. And of

course she had no other way to go after it except through prayers; and so she asked everybody to pray for her to have the house. After she got the house she had everybody start praying so that she could get rid of it because the furnace did not work, it cost too much to run it; and everything was wrong about it!

There is the story of the children searching everywhere for the bluebird of happiness. Nowhere could they find it until they finally stumbled home, and there was the bluebird. This circuitous way of searching for happiness, for the thing that would seem like a fulfillment, is illustrated by the student who was determined to obtain a certain position. After much probing we found it wasn't that position she wanted, but that position would put her in line for another position, and that position would put her in line for another position, and so on and on and on. It wasn't the position she was looking for, it was happiness.

It is not really what is in the conditions that counts, but what you can find in yourself. We give something to the condition that makes it seem to be better than we had thought it was going to be. We better the conditions rather than the conditions bettering us.

People who have been laid hold of by the word of truth have discovered that the nature of happiness is not in things. For that reason, one of the proofs of the spiritual action is that the more you give of happiness the more you have to give. Happiness is really your "widow's cruse," your "purse of Fortunatus"—the more you pour out, the more you find you have to give; though it would stagnate in you if you didn't pour it out. It isn't in trying to acquire or attain that we make our discovery of satisfaction. As it is impossible to give something you do not have, so when you start giving happiness you make the miraculous discovery that you have it to give; and the more you give of it the more you discover you have, because you have touched the infinite depths within yourself, this bottomless well of spiritual action that is inexhaustible.

(To be continued in August issue)

THE SUBSTANCE THAT IS LIFE

Life is a moving force—a parallel equation to light. It flows between the planes and embraces all living matter. It is vibration. Those who are highly intuitive sense it; those who are intellectually analytical comprehend it scientifically. Those who believe, witness it through their being,—and find that it orients outwardly *to all Humanity*. But more deeply, this force, when apprehended, generates the philosophy of Energy, and charges man with awe and wonder, with faith in an all-loving Supreme God, Father of mankind.

I am sure that this Life Force encompasses us not only on this plane, but in the future Steps of Existence which will be revealed on further planes of progression. This will be similar in a very great degree in the Light of the Spirit, the Laws of Vibration.

For many entities there are man-made intellectual barriers of denomination in worship. True praise envelops all in seeking, and in the glory and wonder of Vision. It unites the chord and undertone of preceding generations with the flow of future faith, as it flows through the Present to further generations that shall follow after us.

— Erica May Brooks

After all there is but one race - HUMANITY.

— George Moore

There is no lovelier way to thank God for your sight,
Than by giving a helping hand to someone in the dark.

— Helen Keller

FOUNTAIN OF FORGIVENES

Mark Halpern

In his Essay on Criticism, Alexander Pope declared that "To err is human, to forgive divine." *If all the members of the human family, all nations and factions, were to take those seven words to heart and put them into practice, this earth would become a heaven of goodwill and universal peace. For nothing fuses the souls of mankind into a healing realization of unity as does the spirit of loving forgiveness from the heart.*

IN THE DAYS when Chaldea was known over all the earth for its great astrologers and soothsayers, there lived an old sage who was venerated as a saint. His name was Arkanaz. Wherever he went the people manifested their love for him with various little expressions of devotion and kindness. Often the children would bring flowers to him or strew them in his path, for he spent the years of his life ministering to those in need.

But there was something strange about the life of Arkanaz. Wherever he went he permitted himself to be followed by an old drunkard of evil tongue, who took delight in abusing the venerable sage in whatever way he could. Often the shameless fellow, known as Dabar, would deliberately take possession of the gifts presented to the saint; whether of flowers, fruits, coins or clothing. On a certain day Arkanaz was summoned to the royal palace to appear before the King. Dabar, the toper, tried to follow Arkanaz through the palace gates, but the guards barred the way. He consoled himself by hurling bitter epithets at the sage.

Ushered into the King's presence, Arkanaz knelt at the foot of the throne and bowed his head before the monarch, who said: "Arise, Arkanaz. No sage whose life of wisdom and saintliness is a blessing to my people, need ever kneel at my feet."

Arkanaz arose and said: "Thou art gracious to thy humble ser-

vant—more gracious than I deserve, O King."

"And thou art too modest of thy worth, Arkanaz," "It is not well for an illustrious sage such as thou to act as though he were a person of no consequence. That is the reason I ordered thee to be brought before me. For some time I have been receiving reports of thy strange attitude of nonresistance toward an abusive toper who follows thee about. Why do you continue to tolerate his insulting behavior?"

A faint smile crept over the features of the kindly sage as he softly replied: "Since thou desirest the reason, O King, I must unveil the tragic secret of my youth and relate what befell me when I lived in a little village on the eastern border of thy Kingdom. I was the happiest of mortals; for I was in love with the rarest flower of young womanhood. Her name was Naruna, and we were to be married before another moon had passed.

"But my happiness was not meant to last. For early one evening, having not seen my beloved that day, I decided to surprise her with an unexpected visit to her home. As I approached the house, I heard the plaintiff melody of a lyre coming from the garden. Then I caught the sound of Naruna's voice. From behind the shadowy trees in the garden, I heard a soft male voice singing a love song accompained by the lyre. Upon advancing another few steps, I could see in the bright moonlight of the garden the young poet Laran, the most gifted youth in that part of the Kingdom. It was he who was plucking the strings of his lyre the while he wooed Naruna with his romantic verses. I could look on no longer. Approaching them, I told Naruna that what I had seen was enough to indicate she would never be loyal to me. She could have Laran for her husband instead of me. With those words, I strode quickly out of the garden, the fires of wrath and jealousy flaming within me.

"But Naruna ran after me, seizing me by the arm and imploring my forgiveness. She kept assuring me that she still loved me as much as ever, that there was none other in her heart but me; that Laran's lyre and singing had intoxicated her senses for the moment, and she had not re-

alized what had happened. With tearful words she begged my forgiveness. But the fires of jealousy had consumed the compassion of my heart, and I pushed her violently from me.

"The next morning, Naruna's lifeless body was found at the foot of a precipice several miles from the village."

At this point, the sage paused, straightened himself as he brought his thoughts into line with the King's presence, and resumed saying: "I shall not burden thee, O gracious King, by relating in detail the depths of grief and remorse into which I sang. Had it not been for the fortunate arrival in our village of the great soothsayer, Taran, I should either have lost my mind or taken my life. He advised me to journey to Cathay, and there seek the Fountain of Forgiveness, whose waters would give me surcease of sorrow and remorse. So, early one dawn I started out on my long journey."

"At last after many moons of wandering in the vast interior of Cathay, I came to the Fountain of Forgiveness. Outwardly, it appeared no different from other fountains. But the water seemed to sparkle with the radiant joyous essence of pure life. Eagerly I drank of those waters, and immediately my heart grew light. Then, it seemed that I heard a soft familiar voice behind me.

"'Arkanaz...O Arkanaz, my beloved...At last thou hast found the healing waters of forgiveness for thy sorrowing soul.' Turning about, I beheld my beloved Naruna standing in an ethereal light of melting softness, looking even more lovely than I had seen her when in her fleshly vesture. I threw myself at her feet, and dared not look up into her eyes as I addressed her: 'Naruna, thou shining star of my lonely existence! Day and night, have I cried out to thee for thy forgiveness, but thou hast never answered me. Tell me, my beloved, that thou dost not hold that one brief hour of my demented jealousy in hateful judgment of me.'

"'Ah, my poor Arkanaz. I have never judged thee—for I love thee as I always have, and always shall. Thou hast long since been forgiven. Be not lonely for the sight of me, for I am always with thee, my

beloved. The day will come when thou wilt leave thy earthly garment and then thou shalt behold me constantly.'

"'O Naruna, my beloved', I replied, 'in what manner may I show my gratitude for thy forgiveness?'

"'I desire no gratitude, Arkanaz. But if thou wilt never forget throughout thy days on earth to practice constantly to thy fellowman the the godly qualities of forbearance and forgiveness, thou wilt make me happy; and thy life shall be a blessing to the world—and a source of infinite happiness to me, and to all alike.'

"Thus, O King, did the fair Naruna speak unto me. And I took solemn oath before my beloved that I would conduct myself even as she had entreated me out of the wondrous understanding of her heart."

As Arkanaz concluded his story, the King arose. And with a gracious smile in his eyes, he said: "O venerable sage, thou hast made the matter clear unto me. It is not for me to command thee to break that holy oath of long ago, even did I feel so inclined. Continue to live thy life according to thine own wisdom. Thou shalt not be questioned henceforth as to thy conduct.

"And with that, Arkanaz was dismissed. But shortly afterwards, a marked change was noticed in the toper's attitude toward the sage. Dabar stopped drinking. He no longer abused Arkanaz, but grew more gentle and considerate, until at last he became the devoted disciple of the saintly man. To those who asked him what had caused the transformation, he explained:

"Before I met Arkanaz, people of superior virtue were always denouncing me as an incurable scoundrel and drunkard. Everybody tried to reform me, but they all made me feel a worthless good-for-nothing. I thought Arkanaz would be the same. I could not understand his patience with me. At last I came to see that he did not look down upon me or hold me cheaply. No matter what I did to him, he forgave me and returned only kindness for my abuse. For the first time in my life, I felt there was good-

ness in me. That goodness I saw in Arkanaz, and it passed between us, until I wanted only to be like him."

* * *

Condemnation never brings out the best, either in the condemner or in the one condemned. Often it brings forth only a feeling of separativeness and antagonism. Forgiveness, on the other hand, is the great solvent in human relations. It is the spirit of compassionate and loving understanding in manifestation. For—"To err is human, to forgive divine...."

The mystic Experience: this is surely the only ultimate. A mystic, however much and however often the word may be abused, should be defined as the man who is no longer mystified—by religions, by theologies, by doctrines, by formulations. He is at ease with religions, having attained Religion; he is no longer diseased by overdoses of doctrine. He occupies this favorable position by virtue of his experience which brings with it such joy and such certainty that he no longer needs dogmas about salvation: this experience to him is salvation. He no longer needs to solve the lesser problems; they have been dissolved. It may not last for more than a few minutes but it changes the man's outlook forever—he has seen the light. These men are our true leaders; their goal of higher consciousness our chief hope. Their message comes down the years always with the same power to convince, always undated and undating. Their words bring continual support to the whole and the happy, and they bring hope and healing to the unhappy, to the broken in heart, to the doubtful and to the dying. This crucial experience is often accompanied by intense inner illumination. Yet the accent is not on the inner but on the illumination: it just is *light*. . .'bright effluence of bright essence increate.'

— John Stewart Collis
in "The World of Light"

REJOICING

Oh, give me hands to be thy servant, Lord
The strength to withstand praise,
That in THY WORK and in THY WORD,
I may be filled with joyous days.

— Helen Gee Woods

BELIEVING

Believing is a fine and
Much expressed deed.
Putting it into action
The birth of a dormant seed.

— Marjorie Martin

Great Spirit, help me never to judge another until I have walked in his moccasins for two weeks.

— Sioux Indian Prayer

From the Bookshelf . . . .

This is an invitation to all readers. Frequently our bimonthly carries reviews of new books on prayer and subjects of spiritual interest. We will continue this practice. In addition, it seems worth while to offer all readers the opportunity to bring to general attention particular passages and sections from their own books which are especially worthy of sharing with the many others who peruse these pages.

You are invited to submit to FIP a selection of your choice. The only limitations will be that the passage be restricted to approximately 250 words. Also, it is necessary that the material be accompanied by a full description of the source. To start this section of the bimonthly, your editor offers the following from a book which has been a source of strength and inspiration:

* * *

From: *THE WONDER OF PRAYER, by Shelton Hale Bishop; Seabury Press, 1959; Selection from Chapter Six, entitled "Peace"—*

Man needs love, deep love; he needs it in the very marrow of his bones, in his eyes, in all his nerve cells, even in the very ends of his fingers. *For man cannot live without love.*

Man needs truth, too. It must be in the very composition of his physical and spiritual structure, in his architecture, his name, his word, his promise, his agreement, his oath—society hangs on what must be true. The line, the musical note, the report, the judgment—all need to be true. Even what I believe, my faith, is a mockery if it be not true.

Man needs right! It is a miracle how early a child senses what is fair. Not yet able to distinguish phantasy from reality, preferring perhaps story to fact, yet a sense of what is right seems to be woven into the fabric of his dawning personality—a right strongly colored at first by what is right for the child and only dimly sensed; but nonetheless, a sense of right is there.

NOTICES and COMMENTS

NEW TRUSTEES. It is with a great deal of pleasure that we announce the acceptance of Trustee positions by two friends of the Fellowship whose dedication to our goals has been shown in many ways. They are Mrs. Samuel Chamberlain of Marblehead, Massachusetts, and Mr. Marius C. Thode of New York.

Mrs. Chamberlain has been of invaluable assistance over the years, in gaining new readers for the bimonthly, providing material for its pages and offering other means of support. In this issue, the excerpt from the book, HAPPINESS HERE AND NOW by Genevieve Burnell, was made available by Mrs. Chamberlain. Our new Trustee has had a life-long vital interest in religion and philosophy; she studied under Mr. and Mrs. George Edwin Burnell and their daughter, Genevieve, and has read and studied in various fields of Eastern and Christian writings. Mr. Chamberlain is an artist, writer and photographer and has produced many books. The Chamberlains lived for many years in France, where their two daughters were born.

Mr. Thode is a former Sales Executive whose life in business as well as privately has been firmly grounded in what he calls a "*silent partnership with God.*" A relative newcomer to the Fellowship, Mr. Thode is in thorough agreement with the aims and purpose of our organization and has shown much enthusiasm in furthering the work. He was quick to recognize that "to aim for a *World United in Prayer* is truly an ambitious program, but it is the one and only answer to overcome hatred..." As can be seen in this issue, his support has taken the form of an article which we are carrying as a "Guest Editorial." What cannot readily be seen, but which has been a source of much encouragement, has been our new Trustee's continuous efforts to increase our circulation and obtain new friends. We are confident that Mr. Thode's assistance will do much to stimulate new interest and extend the outreach of Fellowship in Prayer.

LIBRARY NOTE. Our library continues to expand as friends provide new volumes for its shelves. We gratefully acknowledge the gift of LIFE IS THE HEALER by Eileen J. Garrett from Mr. Frederic Snyder, one of our Trustees.

SURPRISE HONOR. The great many friends of one of our Contributing Editors, Dr. W. J. Thompson, will be pleased to learn of a new honor bestowed on him. In a move which came as a complete surprise to Dr. Thompson, he was designated "Pastor Emeritus" of the Congregational Church of Sierra Madre, California, in recognition of his devotion to the church over the last half-century. We join in congratulating Dr. Thompson, who has exhibited similar devotion to the cause of the Fellowship since 1952.

AN INSPIRING VISIT. A good friend of the Fellowship, Miss Grace Bush of Los Angeles, California, spent several days in New York and the surrounding area in May. During her visit she entertained and inspired a number of audiences with her program of lectures, illustrated with music. Among the most popular of her presentations, was her special feature on "Famous Mothers of the World." While in the East, Miss Bush thoughtfully contacted the Fellowship and we were able to spend many pleasant moments with her. Our Executive Secretary was privileged to attend a beautiful recital given in her honor on Sunday Evening, May 22. We always appreciate meeting Fellowship friends and we hope more will contact us when they are in the metropolitan area.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. FIP is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS—

We are sincerely grateful to those readers who have renewed, and are renewing their subscriptions. Those who have not yet done so are invited to renew as soon as possible. Ours is a nonprofit fellowship and only through the help and cooperation of those who are interested in our work can FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER be improved and extended throughout the world.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

If your address has changed in recent months, we would like to be notified promptly, so that there may be no delay in receiving each issue of the bi-monthly. Please send your old address as well as the new one—and don't forget to add the Zip Code number. Thank you!

The world is with us much too much, and we need a more relaxing touch. To me, Fellowship in Prayer provides restful reading just before retiring. I keep the current issue handy, and in the re-reading of it, I discover a message which I missed in the first reading. It is like a Doctor's prescription for a tonic, which we can renew without any extra cost.

— A Reader

"...The Fellowship in Prayer magazine has been very precious to me over the years, and my copy is passed on to a friend who is now in a Rest Home. She is over ninety years of age, but she types copies of the poems for me (and others); then lends the magazine to friends who return it later to her. She then gives it to the Chaplain at the Home! So you see it is well read, and I hope that in this way others have been led to join the Fellowship.

I was ninety (90) years old in January, and I have been a 'shut-in' for some time...but I am blessed with a wonderful daughter... The association with F.I.P. has meant much to me, and I have wished through the years that I could be of just a little more help in return...."

—Alice M. Heald

(Mrs. Heald of Puyallup, Washington has been a member of Fellowship in Prayer since September 1950, after reading an announcement about the founding of FIP by Carl A. Evans in GUIDEPOSTS magazine.)

F I P F e a t u r e

New Bible House Dedicated

NEW YORK. The new Bible House was dedicated here on Palm Sunday afternoon, April 3. Located at Broadway and Sixty-first Street, the twelve-story building is the world headquarters of the American Bible Society's program of translation, publication and distribution of Holy Scriptures in the United States and 150 countries throughout the world. It will bring together Society activities now conducted in four scattered and overcrowded New York City locations.

The dedication of the building—the fifth home of the American Bible Society—marks another important milestone in the Society's 150-year history.

During the first few years after its founding in 1816, the American Bible Society led a nomadic existence in downtown Manhattan. In 1823, the first Bible House—a three-story structure—was erected on Nassau Street. By 1829 it was necessary to erect a second building across the street.

When the second structure was outgrown, the third Bible House was built on Astor Place in 1852. This imposing block-square structure served for 100 years. In 1936 the headquarters moved to Park Avenue, with the shipping department remaining on Astor Place and others moving back later.

Today's new Bible House will serve as: a translations center; a publishing department consistently operating at a loss because Scriptures are sold below cost or given away; a world-wide distribution center; a bookstore where Scriptures are sold in many languages below cost; a center encouraging more effective and faithful reading of Scriptures; an agency for Holy Scriptures for more than sixty-five Protestant denominations; a library contain- 100,000 volumes in over 1,000 languages of a single book, as well as research materials for world-wide scholars; and a museum for rare Scriptures and historical Biblical exhibits.

Located as it is, near the new cultural center of the city, Bible House will serve as a witness to New York City, the nation, and the world that *God's word for a New Age is a living reality.*

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OUR GREATER DAY

The Pendulum swings
First from Puritanity
To licentiousness
From Judaism
To Christianity
From Sophist
To Epicurean.
The Pendulum swings
From one ethnic group
To another,
But as the clock of life
Ticks off its moments
The swinging is less
Until one day it will cease
And all will know empathy.

— Florence Beck Unangst

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